



# A Great Reckoning in a Little Room<sup>1</sup> (1593)

## Part One: The Assassins



“Death’s a great disguiser; and you may add to it.”  
—Shakespeare<sup>2</sup>

“To repeat a story after another is not to confirm it.”  
—Gifford

“With one possessed of so strenuous a nostril for scenting out such carrion gossip as Gabriel Harvey, ignorant of that ‘tragic end,’ one may well question if ever it were true.”  
—Dr. Grosart

“All that impugn a received religion or superstition are by the adverse part branded with the name of Atheists.”  
—Francis Bacon’s Essay: *Of Atheism*

### I

Christopher [Kit<sup>3</sup>] Marlowe,<sup>4</sup> dramatist and poet, was the son of John Marlowe, who being a shoemaker of Canterbury was also a member of the shoemakers’ and tanners’ Guild of the town. Young

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<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare. *As You Like It*.

<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare. *Measure for Measure*, 4.2.174.

<sup>3</sup> Th. Heywood writing in 1635: “Marlo, renowned for his rare art and wit, could ne’er attain beyond the name of Kit.”

<sup>4</sup> b.1564–d.1593.

Marlowe was baptized on February 26, 1563–64 where his parents had been married at St. George the Martyr, Canterbury.<sup>5</sup>

When Marlowe was in his tenth year, Queen Elizabeth visited Canterbury, and was magnificently entertained by the authorities; a presentation no doubt young Marlowe witnessed, being he was educated at the King's school of his native town, the chief educational institution of Canterbury. This institute is said to be the oldest grammar school in England and traditionally founded by Archbishop Theodore in 968, but was re-established and given its royal title by Henry VIII.

Marlowe received his early education at this ancient seat of learning, but the date of his entry is unknown. A certain number of deserving boys were accepted as commoners, that is, as lads who studied at the school yet were not on the foundation. These lads were eligible for the foundation provided they had the capacity to win a scholarship before they attained the age-limit of fifteen. The King's scholars were elected by merit, at the November Chapter, from among those boys who had been some time at the school to fill such vacancies as might occur in the ensuing year. Marlowe was one of these successful lads, and was admitted on the foundation on January 14, 1579, in the quarter ending at Lady Day. Each of the scholars after admission received a quarterly stipend of £1, which was not an inconsiderable sum in those days.<sup>6</sup>

The King's School was intended for the education of the sons of what the historian terms 'the best families,' but Archbishop Cranmer, at the re-establishment of the school, instructed the Commissioners, who sought to restrict the scholarships to the children of high born, wealthy parents as follows:

"If the gentleman's son be apt to learning, let him be admitted; if not, let the poor man's apt child enter his room."

And so Marlowe, proving apt, was admitted. Archbishop Parker, who was of his predecessor's way of thinking, endowed the school with various scholarships at Cambridge University, open to all who proved their fitness.

The curriculum of the school comprised a certain quantum of Latin, and probably a little Greek for the higher forms; but modern languages were ignored. For those intending to enter one of the learned professions a good sound classical foundation was provided, and as Marlowe was destined for the Church this provision was necessary for him.

On March 17, 1580–81, Marlowe matriculated as a pensioner of Corpus Christi College in Cambridge. He is entered in the register as *Marlin*, without a Christian name; this would tell us that he did not come up to Cambridge with a scholarship from his school.

In 1583–84 he obtained his Bachelor's degree. It has been suggested that his academic expenses were defrayed by Sir Roger Manwood, the judge who lived at St. Stephen's near Canterbury, and whose death in 1592 was the subject of a Latin elegy written by Marlowe.

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<sup>5</sup> Shakespeare was christened exactly two months later. Chapman, Green, Peele, and Lyly were all probably born some ten years earlier; Nash and Chettle about the same time as Marlowe; Heywood about 1570; Ben Jonson in 1573.

<sup>6</sup> Multiply by 100 to find the equivalent of Elizabethan currency.

The rooms which Marlowe had to share with his two chamber mates (Thexton and Lewger) were not very commodious, and were constructed out of a storehouse. The so-called chamber consisted really of two very small rooms opening into one another, on the ground floor in the North West angle of the court. Although separate beds were allowed for scholars above the age of fourteen, separate rooms, even for Fellows, were rarely permitted, and the three Canterbury scholars must have been put to strange shifts to have got three beds, even truckle-beds, into the space provided.

As College life filled so large a space and was so momentous a period in Marlowe's short existence, an official record of the daily routine, somewhat different from the poor scholar's account, will scarcely be deemed redundant:

"In the morning, at five o'clock, the students were assembled by the ringing of the bell, in the college-chapel, to hear the morning service of the Church, followed on some days by short homilies by the Fellows. These services occupied about an hour; after which the students had breakfast. Then followed the regular work of the day. It consisted of two parts: the college studies, or the attendance of the students on the lectures and examinations of the college tutors or lecturers in Latin, Greek, Logic, Mathematics, Philosophy, etc. The University Exercises, or the attendance of the students, together with the students of other colleges, in the public schools of the University, either to hear the lectures of the University professors of Greek, Logic, etc., or to hear and take part in the public disputations of those students of all colleges who were preparing for their degrees. After four hours, the students dined together at twelve o'clock in the halls of their respective colleges. After dinner, there was generally again an hour or two of attendance on the declamations and disputations of contending graduates either in college or in the public schools. During the remainder of the day, with the exception of attendance at the evening service in chapel, and at supper in the Hall at seven o'clock, the students were free to dispose of their own time. It was provided by the statutes of Christ's that no one should be out of college after nine o'clock from Michaelmas to Easter, or after ten from Easter to Michaelmas."

Another Fellow from Marlowe's educational years was a Francis Kett who was burnt for heresy at Norwich in 1589. The celebrated author Malone gives a theory on this event, being that Marlowe derived from Kett the advanced views on religion, which he subsequently developed, yet does not justify by the extant details of the 'blasphemous heresies' for which Kett suffered. If Marlowe transgressed any laws or broke any rules, history has no record of the circumstance. One thing is certain, and must have influenced the boy and the man: he was brought into contact both at Canterbury and Cambridge with dramatic performances, such as they were then, and beheld them with admiration and courage.

Marlowe is known to have had a vacation or leave of absence for every year of his residence at Cambridge, but it is very uncertain how long he was away on these occasions. Where Marlowe spent his holidays is unknown, although it may be assumed that he returned home to his kindred in Canterbury at least during the earlier years of his College career, but as he naturally formed acquaintances, and some in a higher class of life than that of his family, it is probable that he sometimes visited them. The various

wild guesses of Marlowe's editors that he might have spent a portion of his time in the army or in foreign travel, is circumstantial; there is no evidence to support this.

Until Marlowe settled in London his time can be fairly well accounted for and probably devoted to literary work. A ballad, purporting to have been written in his later years entitled *The Atheist's Tragedy* describes him in his early age as a player at the Curtain Theatre, where he 'brake his leg in one lewd scene' but the ballad is in all probability, as now suspected, one of John Payne Collier's forgeries.

No original portrait of Marlowe's is known to exist. We only find a fanciful head that appears in Cunningham's edition and is claimed to belong to the poet. We suspect this fanciful head to be one of Cunningham's forgeries, though we have no proof to support this.

## II

Thomas Hariot, the great mathematician, astronomer, and personal friend to Sir Walter Raleigh, writing to Kepler, deplored having to live at a time in which it was impossible to express one's views freely; and his feelings were shared by most of his learned contemporaries. This was at the same period when Marlowe graduated and about the year 1588, *Tamburlaine* was acted.<sup>7</sup> There is no hesitation in this first work of Marlowe's. He obtained his material for *Tamburlaine* chiefly from Pedro Mexia's *Spanish Life of Timur*, which was published at Seville in 1543, and translated into Italian, French and English. The English translation, known as Fortescue's *Foreste*, appeared in 1571.

Not long after *Tamburlaine*, there appeared a *Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*. The exact date is very doubtful. The legend of a man who sells his soul to the devil seems to have appeared about the sixth century, and to have floated down the Middle Ages in many forms; in one form it was used by Calderon in *El Magico Prodigioso*. In the early part of the sixteenth century, it became identified with a Doctor Faustus, who practiced necromancy, and was the friend of Paracelsus and Cornelius Agrippa.

By now, Marlowe began to live in intimate relations with Thomas Walsingham (b.1563) of Chislehurst who was first cousin of the Queen's Secretary and Master Spy, Sir Francis Walsingham.

Bundles of records show that Raleigh was on friendly terms with Marlowe; Nash, who had sometimes been a jealous rival, wrote an elegy on Marlowe's untimely death which has not survived; an anonymous writer in 1600 speaks lovingly of 'kynde Kit Marloe;' Edward Blunt, Marlowe's friend and publisher, writes in words that have a genuine ring of 'the impression of the man that hath been dear unto us, living an after-life in our memory'.

After Marlowe's death, he was buried in an unknown spot, beneath the grey towers of St. Nicholas, but there is a monument to Marlowe's memory, executed by Mr. E. Onslow Ford, A.R.A., that has been placed, by public subscription, near the Cathedral at Canterbury. It was unveiled by Henry Irving on September 16, 1891.

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<sup>7</sup> Edward Alleyn (often spelt Allen) took the part of *Tamburlaine*. He was famous both as an actor and as the founder of Dulwich College, was born in 1566 in London, according to Fuller, near Devonshire House. He was the younger son of a porter to the Queen, who acquired some property. During the plague of 1593, the year of Marlowe's assassination, we find Alleyn on a provincial tour through Bristol, Shrewsbury, Chester, and York.

We have no more substantial details of this poet's personal life, and what we have on his secret Agent life, is what follows.

### III

We know that Marlowe left Cambridge in 1576; he travelled to Rheins around 1579 where a man called Richard Baines was also a resident of that town. We do not know how these two met, but we learn that around 1591, in the town of Flushing, Baines now being Marlowe's 'chamber fellow' first betrayed him in regards to counterfeiting the Royal Coin. This alleged charge can be found in a letter written by Robert Sydney to Burghley, which will be given presently.

Not only has Marlowe developed an acquaintance with Baines, but also with a Gifford Gilbert, a diocese of Lichfield (*b.1560*) who travelled extensively to Rome, the Rheims, and England. By 1587 Gilbert was already acting as an Agent for the English government, plotting the overthrow of Mary Queen of Scots, who was executed February 8, 1587.

Before we continue with the counterfeit incident, a note must be made in order we understand Marlowe's style of language. Considering the audacity of Marlowe's language in his dramas, it is not to be wondered that he came in contact with the authorities on several occasions. It is interesting to learn, that on September 18, 1589, Marlowe is involved in a duel in Hog Lane:

"A certain Thomas Watson, lately a gentleman of London, intervened upon the outcry of the bystanders, for the separation of the aforesaid William Bradley and Christopher Morley who were thus fighting."

The above-mentioned Watson was found to have killed in self-defence in this incident, and both poets went back to Newgate's dungeon to await trial. Marlowe had to pay a fine of £40 as bail, and also furnishes two sureties of £20 each, as conditions precedent to his release. The Privy Council appointed sureties for both Marlowe and Watson. We find it peculiar that Ingram, in his work entitled *Marlowe and his Poetry* published in 1914, is unaware of the incident and offers a different story which we offer here:

"In the latter part of 1589 an incident occurred in his [Marlowe's] career which, if not clearly explained in the known records of his time, can be plausibly accounted for. The civic authorities of London disapproved of every kind of dramatic entertainment taking place in the metropolis, and during Elizabeth's Reign issued various stringent proclamations against such performances within the city boundaries.

"Theatrical entertainments of all kinds were detested by the Puritan portion of the Corporation, and many other sober minded citizens regarded stage-acting with dislike as calculated to allure and lead their apprentices and the younger members of their households into vicious company.

“Edward Tylney, Master of the Revels, inspired apparently by a higher official, wrote about the end of 1589 to the Lord Mayor of London to tell him that he was displeased with the companies of players belonging to the Lord Admiral and to Lord Strange, as they handled: Matters of Divinity and State without judgment or decorum, and enjoined him to ‘stay them.’ The Lord Mayor gladly availed himself of this long-desired opportunity, and sent for both companies and gave them strict charge to forbear playing till further orders.

“The Lord Admiral’s players obeyed, but the Lord Strange’s, in a contemptuous manner went to the Cross Keyes [Bishopsgate] and played that afternoon. Upon which the Mayor committed two of them to the Compter, and prohibited all playing for the future, till the [Lord] Treasurer’s pleasure was further known. Who the two players committed to prison were is not known, but Marlowe was then writing plays for Lord Strange’s company, and many speeches of his dramatic personages certainly handled matters of Divinity and State in a manner which in those times would be considered without judgment or decorum.

“It is, therefore, not wonderful to find that Marlowe had to appear before William Fleetwood, Recorder of the City of London, at Clerkenwell, and give two sureties of £20 each, and enter into recognizance himself for £40 that he should appear at the next sessions at Newgate to answer all that was objected against on the part of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, that is, of course, on the part of the public authorities.”

#### IV

Two years later, Marlowe is allegedly involved in another incident, this time more grave:

To the Right Honourable my Lord of Burghley  
Lord Treasurer of England  
January 26, 1591

Right Honourable,

Besides the prisoner Evan Flud[d] I have given in charge to this bearer my ancient two other prisoners, the one name Christopher Marly, by his profession a scholar, and the other Gifford Gilbert a goldsmith taken here for coining, and their money I have sent over unto your Lordship.

The matter was revealed unto me the day after it was done, by one Richard Baines whom also my ancient shall bring unto your Lordship. He was their chamber fellow and fearing the success, made me acquainted with all. The men being examined apart never denied anything, only protesting that what was done was only to see the goldsmith’s coining. And truly I am of opinion that the poor man was only brought in under that cover, whatever intent the other two had at the time. And indeed they do one accuse

another to have been the inducers of him, and to have intended to practise it hereafter, and have as it were justified him unto me.

But howsoever it happened a Dutch shilling was uttered, and else not any piece, and indeed I do not think that they would have uttered many of them. For the metal is plain pewter and with half an eye to be discovered.

Notwithstanding I thought it fit to send them over unto your Lordship, to take their trial as you shall think best. For I will not stretch my commission to deal in such matters, and much less to put them at liberty and to deliver them into the towns hands being them Queen's subjects, and not required neither of this said town I know not how it would have been liked, especially since part of that which they did counterfeit was her Majesty's Coin.

The goldsmith [Gilbert] is an excellent workman and if I should speak my conscience had no intent hereunto. The scholar [Marlowe] says himself to be well known both to the Earl of Northumberland and my Lord Strange. Baines and he do also accuse one another of intent to go to the enemy or to Rome, both as they say of malice one to another.

Hereof I thought fit to advertise your Lordships, leaving the rest to their own confession and my ancient's report.

And so do humbly take my leave at Flushing the 26 of January 1591.

Your Honour's very obedient to do you service,

*R. Sydney*

[Endorsed] 26 Jan. 1591. Sir Robert Sydney to my L. He sends over by this bearer his Ancient one Evan Lloyd, and two others Christopher Marly and Gifford Gilbert a goldsmith taken for coinage, to be tried here for that fact. There has been only one Dutch shilling uttered, the metal plain pewter.

From the above letter, it seems Marlowe was involved in counterfeiting, together with an Evan Fludd, and the 'goldsmith' Gilbert. We learn that Baines brought this incident to Sydney's attention who was Governor at Flushing at the time. Those involved were sent back to England to be prosecuted; the penalty would have been painful, there is no doubt, yet no trial, at least that has come down to us, emerges from their acts; not only that, but three weeks after Marlowe is returned as prisoner from Flushing, his play *The Jew of Malta* is on the boards of the Rose Theatre in London.

An obvious conclusion is that Marlowe's governmental position and habitual espionage actions at the time were more important to the Privy Council; it may not have profited them to throw this young Agent in some decayed jail in the Tower.

But was in more curious, is that the Gifford Gilbert mentioned in Sydney's letter to Burghley, had died in a French jail in 1590.<sup>8</sup> We could calculate the differences on dates between the Gregorian and Julian calendar since many countries had already established the Julian Calendar that was used by the general population long after the official introduction of the Gregorian Calendar. However, we do not have any note from Sydney's letter if it was written under the Julian or Gregorian Calendar, and therefore must either assume that (a) Gilbert was still alive at the time of this incident, or (b) that Sydney must have either misidentified his third prisoner. Whatever the case may be, it is evident that another mask was unfolding, either to or against Sydney's knowledge.

We may say after extensive research that we do know that another member of the Gilbert family could have been the person that Sydney had arrested, but one may ask, would Burghley not suspect of the Gilbert identity that Sidney was relating to? Burghley must have known who this Gilbert was, since the latter was involved in the spy web of Walsingham's Babington Plot.<sup>9</sup>

To the identity of this Evan Fludd mentioned in Sydney's letter, we know that he was in The Netherlands at this time being the son of Lord Lumley's sister, serving in the regiment by 1591. He had assassinated George Gilbert's brother in a quarrel and fled to Antwerp. We also know that a Gilbert of Itchell, Hants, and Weston-under-Hill, Gloucester, was born of a family, which long remained Catholic. His brother, Dr. William Gilbert, eventually became Archbishop of Rheims. Gilbert lost his father when he was quite young. In 1578, when a mere youth, he was drawn into Elizabeth's Court and made a Gentleman Pensioner, but he soon wasted his patrimony by extravagance, and became involved in disreputable and criminal enterprises. In 1586, when arrested on suspicion of complicity in Babington's plot,<sup>10</sup> he was wanted for a whole series of misdemeanours, receiving stolen goods, assisting burglars, and profit sharing with many robbers of many sorts.

Before we look into Baines, we will delve into Sydney (*b.1563*), the bearer of gifts to Burghley. He was the nephew of the Earl of Leicester, who became first Earl of the fifth creation in 1618. Richard Verstegan wrote a letter to Robert Parsons in October 1592 regarding Sydney's state of mind:

"Sir Robert Sydney, the Governor of Flushing, hath of late been distracted of his wits, and hath burnt almost all his books, and still cried out that he was damned. Some ministers have been busy with him to put him out of this humour, and some report that he is somewhat more quiet; howbeit, he still retaineth some degree of frenzy."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Pollen. *Mary Queen of Scots and the Babington Plot*, 1922.

<sup>9</sup> It may here be observed, that for the sake of uniformity with the calendar of the greater part of Europe, an act of Parliament was passed, in 1751, for the adoption of the new style in all public and legal transactions; and, as one of the results, the commencement of the legal year was changed from April 25 to January 1. This will account for a frequent difference between the dates of earlier historians and the dates we now have come to know.

<sup>10</sup> He then carved his name and arms in the Beauchamp Tower.

<sup>11</sup> Stonyhurst MS., Coll. B, 61.



One year after the incident of Marlowe's alleged counterfeit activities, and one year before his assassination, Sydney is described to have 'some degree of frenzy' about him. Nevertheless, on March 3, 1591, three months after Sydney's letter, a warrant Burghley signs is released:

"For the payment of £13 6s 8d to Sydney's ensign, David Lloyd, for bringing of letters from ye said Sir Robert Sydney, Knight, importing her Majesty's special service, together with three prisoners committed to his charge."<sup>12</sup>

## V

The art of printing in the Reign of Elizabeth was fully employed by the controversies of the times. In the year 1585, the puritan publications had become so obnoxious to the Court, that a decree of the Star Chamber confined the exercise of that art to London and the universities, and forbade the setting up a press without a license. However, the non-conformists rendered this prohibition of no avail, by printing their works abroad, and importing them to England, where they had an extensive circulation. The High Commission Court also laid a further restraint on the press, by prohibiting the printing of satires and epigrams. The puritans, notwithstanding the orders of the government, had a private press where they printed their controversial work. It was first stationed at Moulsey in Surrey, but the vigilance of the Court obliged it to shift its quarters and retire to Fawsley, Norton, Coventry, Woolston, and Manchester. This press cost several persons their lives who had dared to harbour it.

Periodical publications called *Newspaper* first took their rise. The first English Newspaper appeared on July 23, 1588, and was called *The English Mercurie*.<sup>13</sup> We may ask if Marlowe also in need of a printing establishment outside of Elizabeth's censorship? Was Flushing that port of printing?

We may also go beyond this, and ask was Robert Cecil (during James' Reign) doing business with counterfeiters in Flanders? We ask this, as there is a peculiar passage in Welldon's *Court and Character* (reprinted in 1817) that tells us how Robert Cecil:

"Not only shewed [showed] his wisdom for his own benefit, but to the world (what the King's [James'] natural disposition was) to be easily abused, and would take counterfeit coin for current payment."

Further, we may put to ask if Marlowe, under Burghley's directions, set up a counterfeiting agency that lasted through the days of King James, later to be handled by the son, Robert Cecil. We will never truly know, yet it is a strong suggestion to contemplate since Secret Agents in the Elizabethan and Jacobean era were poorly paid, as records of that time show.

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<sup>12</sup> Public Records Office, SP E351, 542, 169.

<sup>13</sup> James G Barlace. *A Historical Sketch of the Progress of Knowledge in England*, 1819.

We cannot deny that Marlowe was making connections with Dutch printers, if we are to assume that his translations of Ovid's *Amores* were indeed translated by him and were printed at Middleburg, close to Flushing that was a small yet thriving printing industry at the time. It was in this same area that John Davies' *Epigrams* was printed, for Davies was in the Low Countries in the summer of 1592. Of Marlowe's translation of Ovid's *Elegies*, Barlace tells us:

"Ovid's *Elegies* were translated by Christopher Marlowe. The elegant language of this version, can make no atonement for its obscenity, Marlowe must have been wholly void of principle and decency, when he translated those elegies. Sensible, most probably, that he was giving offence by his conduct, he procured the work to be printed at Middleburg; [very close to Flushing] but by the commands of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London, it was burnt at the Stationers' Hall." <sup>14</sup>

And to offer a different story regarding Ovid's *Elegies*, we offer Ingram's comment that can be found in his work entitled *Marlowe and his Poetry* that was published in 1914:

"Most commentators on Marlowe's works deem that he spent some of his academic time in translating the Latin poets into English, and assume that Ovid's *Elegies* was one result of this early period of his career. The version of the *Amores* ascribed to Marlowe was not published until some years after his death, and has nothing to indicate that he really had anything to do with it beyond the fact that the title-page bears the initials C.M. Marlowe's name then was as valuable as Shakespeare's became subsequently, and it is well known how fraudulently that was appropriated by publishers.

"The earliest editions of these *Elegies* were, professedly, issued in Holland, and were not entered in the Stationers' Register. The fact that the book had never been licensed in England was the reason for its inclusion, with various other unlicensed works, in the conflagration ordered by the Bishops in 1599: this, and not the immorality of the work, was the cause of its destruction, as has been pointed out by Isaac D 'Israeli. The translation was evidently the work of a young man; and if by Marlowe, which is very doubtful, was apparently not intended for publication."

Remaining for a spell in the year 1592, a book entitled *England as seen by Foreigners*, <sup>15</sup> states that in 'May 1592, the Gravesend tilt-boat, having forty passengers on board, was unfortunately run down by 'an hoy' off Greenwich, the Court being there at the time. Most of the passengers were drowned, 'at sight whereof,' (says Stowe) 'the Queene was much frightened.' Marlowe, being a Secret

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<sup>14</sup> James G Barlace. *A Historical Sketch of the Progress of Knowledge in England*, 1819.

<sup>15</sup> Note 7, P. 183.

Agent for the British government, would have been acquainted with this incident as also with the following fellow Agents who play, if not a significant role in his assassination, then a partial one.

**Nicholas Berden.** This Agent's real name seems to have been Thomas Rogers. We know nothing definite about his early history. Rogers was a name taken up by more than one spy at the time, so that caution must be used in classifying references.

Berden was employed against Philip, Earl of Arundel. In the Earl's correspondence, printed by the Catholic Record Society, <sup>16</sup> twenty-six of Berden's letters give many details of his dishonesty, craft, and low morality. This is all we could dig up on the Agent, Nicholas Berden.

**Thomas Phelippes.** This was another extraordinary Agent who was the son of one William Phillips, Customer of London, then a post of importance, to which young Phelippes afterwards succeeded. In appearance, Phelippes must have been forbidding, and have formed somewhat of a contrast to the young and innocent-looking Gilbert that is mentioned by Sydney in the 'counterfeit letter'. Queen Mary herself describes Phelippes 'of low stature, slender every way, eated in the face with small pocks, of short sight, thirty years of age by appearance'.

However unprepossessing in appearance, Phelippes was a splendid correspondent, wrote a beautiful hand, and was evidently untiring with his pen, as witness the innumerable deciphers, copies, and letters which he wrote off with astonishing facility. He must have been well educated, though we know not where. Latin, French and Italian were so familiar to him that he could read ciphers written in those tongues, but in Spanish he was less proficient. He shows a fair acquaintance with literary allusions and classical quotations. This skill he no doubt acquired in great measure by travel.

We first hear of Phelippes in Paris about 1578 where Walsingham had lent him to Sir Amyas Paulet, then Ambassador there, to help in deciphering intercepted letters. <sup>17</sup> In 1580 a mention of a 'Mr. Philipps, an English papist, at Rouen' is heard of and if this be our man, he was pretending to be a Catholic for the time' and we know that Morgan afterwards told Mary he had great hopes of 'recovering' Phelippes to her service, which seems as though he had at least dallied with her cause about this time.

Phelippes travelled a great deal in France, presumably as an intermediary between Walsingham and other spies. <sup>18</sup> Sometimes the still more delicate task was assigned to Phelippes of conveying to French Huguenots the money with which Queen Elizabeth supplied them in their rebellions. Walsingham trusted him so much that he sent over to him in France various intercepted cipher dispatches, of which no one in England could make head or tail.

For some little time before our story begins, Phelippes had come home again, and would seem to have lived in Leadenhall Market. On May 3, 1586, his income was increased by Elizabeth's order. <sup>19</sup> This might look like a retaining fee for the great work of his life on which he was so soon to launch. It may be that Walsingham's plans were by then arranged. It would seem more probable, however, that Phelippes had fallen into debt, as he so often did later on, and that the Queen's largesse was a way of saving his

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<sup>16</sup> Vol. XXI., No. 20.

<sup>17</sup> Sir Francis Bacon was also in Paris during this time.

<sup>18</sup> It is even famed that Dr. John Dee, astrologer to Elizabeth, was one of Walsingham's secret Agents.

<sup>19</sup> Morris. *Sir Amias Poulet*, P. 115.

credit. Be this as it may, Phelippes comes before us as a past master in all branches of letter stealing, and a man with a real genius for deciphering. Yet even here, exaggerations have been made. In fact, the deciphering of Queen Mary's correspondence was easy work in the present case, because at its recommencement, all the old ciphers had changed, and a new alphabet sent to each correspondent. Phelippes took copies of all these keys as they passed, and after that, his work was relatively simple.

Giving some information of those involved in Marlowe's assassination, we may continue with another Agent called **Robert Poley** or **Pooley**. He worked for Sydney's brother and sister-in-law, Sir Philip and Lady Sydney (Walsingham's daughter), in 1585 around the time of the Babington Plot.

Poley was the fourth party in that fatal 'brawl' at the Deptford tavern, and is identical with the Robert Poley employed by Walsingham to spy out the Babington-Mary Queen of Scots Conspiracy in 1586,<sup>20</sup> taking an intimate part in the plot.

Poley had been in Walsingham's service as a spy<sup>21</sup> confidant at the same time that he was hailed as 'Sweet Robin' by Babington and his friends, and when the plot was approaching maturity, it was his role to keep the plotters within the reach of Walsingham's arm until everything was ready for their destruction. Through him, Walsingham kept in touch with Babington's movements until a very few days before his arrest. Even though Poley was arrested when the conspirators were taken, he handed in a long written account of his part in the affair, which is preserved at the Record Office.<sup>22</sup> He was never brought to trial, although Walsingham was evidently not sure that he was innocent of double-dealing.

To Mr. Nau Secretary to her Majesty  
July 1586<sup>23</sup>

Mr. Nau,

I would gladly understand what opinion you hold of one Robert Pooley, whom I find to have intelligence with her Majesty's occasions. I am private with the man, and by mean thereof know somewhat, but suspect more. I pray you deliver your opinion of him.

[Endorsed] July, 1586.

Letters between the Queen of Scots and Anthony Babington.

"To Robert Poley upon a warrant signed by Mr. Vice Chamberlain date July 23, 1590, for bringing letters in post concerning her Majesty's Special Service from Flushing and sundry other places in the Low Countries."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Those involved in Mary Queen of Scots' execution: Gilbert Gifford, Robert Poley, Nicholas Skeres, Thomas Phelippes, Sir Francis Walsingham, Thomas Walsingham, Lord Buckhurst, and Lord Burghley.

<sup>21</sup> The first to offer Walsingham his services as a spy was one Robert Bruce, a Scotch gentleman of good family, the younger brother of the Laird of Binnie.

<sup>22</sup> S. P. Mary Q. of S. XIX., No. 26.

<sup>23</sup> Read. *The Bardon Papers*, Vol. XVII., 1909.

<sup>24</sup> Morris. *Sir Amias Poulet*, P. 115, E351, 542, f.144a.

The other Agent present at Marlowe's death was the alleged assassin **Ingram Frizer**. He was servant to Thomas Walsingham, and was later accused with Nicholas Skeres of swindling a young country gentleman. On October 9, 1589, Frizer purchased the Angel Inn, situated in Basingstoke, from the joint owners, Thomas Bostock of London, and William Symons of Winchester, for £120. Within two months, however, he had sold it for a competent sum to James Deane, citizen and draper of London.

Frizer was intimate with **Nicholas Skeres**. This Agent was also present at Marlowe's assassination. The web does not stop its weave here for Skeres was a servant to the Earl of Essex and is heard of elsewhere only in prison. On March 13, 1594, he was arrested by Sir Richard Martin, Alderman, in a very dangerous company at the house of one Williamson. He appears in the list as Nicholas Kyrse alias Skeers, servant to the Earl of Essex, and was imprisoned with the rest in the Counter in Wood Street to await examination.<sup>25</sup>

There were two witnesses to Marlowe's killing, evidently friends of Marlowe and Frizer, who had been feasting with them. The finding of 'homicide in self-defense' in the case is based upon an examination of Marlowe's body, of the dagger-wounds on Frizer's head, of the dagger itself, and upon the testimony of these two eye-witnesses: Robert Poley and Nicholas Skeres.

Scholars have long been aware, from the Privy Council summons of May 18, 1593, that Marlowe was known to be staying at Thomas Walsingham's house at Scadbury, Chislehurst at the time of his death. But a few months prior, a libel is written and pinned up. We offer it below together with the actions taken:

A Libel  
Fixed upon the French Church Wall, in London.  
Anno 1593<sup>26</sup>

Ye strangers that do inhabit in this land note this same writing do it understand conceit it well for safeguard of your lives your goods, your children, and your dearest wives. Your Machiavellian Merchant spoils the state, your very doth leave us all for dead, your artefacts and craftsman works our fate, and like the Jews, you eat us up as bread. The Merchant doth ingress all kind of wares, forestalls the markets, where so 'ere he goes sends forth his wares, by Peddlers to the fairs, retails at home, and with his horrible shows: undoeth thousands in Baskets your wares trot up and down carried the streets by the country nation, you are intelligencers to the state and crown and in your hearts do wish an altercation, you transport goods, and bring us gauds good store our Lead, our Vital, our Ordinance and what not that Egypt's plagues, vex not the Egyptians more than you do us; then death shall be your lot no prize comes in but you make claim thereto and every merchant hath three trades at least, and Cutthroat like in selling you undo us all, and with our store continually you feast: we cannot suffer long.

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<sup>25</sup> On July 31, 1601, the Privy Council issued warrants to the Keeper of the prison of Newgate for the removing of Skiers and Farmer, prisoners in his custody to Bridewell.

<sup>26</sup> Bodleian Library, MS. Don. d. 152 f. 4v.

Our poor artificers do starve and die for that they cannot now be set on work and for your work more curious to the eye. In Chambers, twenty in one house will lurk, raising of rents, was never known before living far better than at native home and our poor souls, are clean thrust out of door and to the wars are sent abroad to Rome, to fight it out for France and Belgia, and die like dogs as sacrifice for you expect you therefore such a fatal day shortly on you, and yours for to ensue as never was seen. Since words nor threats nor any other thing can make you to avoid this certain ill wheel cut your throats, in your temples praying not Paris massacre so much blood did spill as we will do just vengeance on you all in counterfeiting religion for your flight when 'tis well known, you are loath, for to be thrall your coin, and you as countries cause to this light with Spanish gold, you all are infected and with that gold our Nobles wink at feats. Nobles said I? Nay, men to be rejected, upstarts that enjoy the noblest seats that wound their Country's breast, for lucre's sake and wrong our gracious Queen and Subjects good by letting strangers make our hearts to ache for which our swords are wet, to shed their blood and for a truth let it be understood. Fly, Fly, and never return. *per.* Tamberlaine.

Finis.

A letter to the Lord Mayor of London  
April 1593

Whereas there was a lewd and vile ticket or placard set up upon some post in London purporting some determination and intention that the apprentices should have to attempt some violence on the strangers, and your Lordship as we understand hath by your careful endeavour apprehended one that is to be suspected and thought likely to have written the same.

Because oftentimes it doth fall out of such lewd beginnings that further mischief doth ensue if in time it be not wisely prevented, we have thought good to pray your Lordship to cause the person by you apprehended and committed upon suspicion to have written that libel to be strictly and very carefully examined of his meaning and purpose to make that writing, who were any way privy to the same and did give him advice or encouragement, and what he is able to discover of that fact, and if there shall be pregnant matter to argue him to be guilty of the writing of the said placard, and yet he will not by fair means be brought to utter his knowledge, we think it convenient he shall be punished by torture used in like cases and so compelled to reveal the same.

We trust you are so careful in the government of the city as if some lewd persons had such wicked purpose to attempt anything against strangers that by your careful foresight the same shall be prevented. And herein we pray you to certify us what you shall further understand and learn by the examination of this lewd fellow or by any other means.

Fore noon on Sunday. At the Court at Whitehall, xxij Aprilis, 1593

Present:

Lord Archbishop. Lord Cobham. Lord Keeper. Mr. Treasurer. Earl of Derby. Sir Robert Cecil. Lord Admiral. Sir John Wolley. Lord Chamberlain. Sir John Fortescue.

A letter to Mr. Doctor Cæsar, one of the Masters of the Requests,  
Sir Henry Killigrew, Sir Thomas Wilkes, Knights,  
William Waad and Thomas Phelippes, Esq.  
May 11, 1593

The Queen's Majesty having been made acquainted with certain libels lately published by some disordered and factious persons in and about the city of London, showing an intent in the artificers and others who hold themselves prejudiced in their trades by strangers to use some course of violence to remove the said strangers or by way of tumult to suppress them, a matter very dangerous and with all diligence to be prevented.

Her Majesty therefore, out of her Princely care to remove a mischief of that quality, hath made choice of you to examine by secret means who may be authors of the said libels, and by your industries to discover what the intensions are of the publishers thereof.

For which purpose you may by authority hereof call unto you such persons as you shall think fit and may in likelihood be able to give you light in this cause, as namely any stranger within the city of London or other at your discretions, and by such good, secret and due means as you may to find out the authors, favourers and abettors of the libels and libellers, and to discover their intensions and purposes, wherewith you shall immediately acquaint us, that order may be taken to prevent all inconvenience likely to grow thereof.

Herein you are to use your uttermost endeavours, according to the trust in this case reposed in you.<sup>27</sup>

At the Star Chamber,<sup>28</sup> on Friday, being the 11th of May, 1593.

Present:

Lord Archbishop. Earl of Derby. Lord Keeper. Lord Buckhurst. Lord Treasurer. Sir Robert Cecil. Sir John Fortescue.

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<sup>27</sup> Following the posting of the Dutch Church Libel on 5 May.

<sup>28</sup> Named for a chamber in Westminster Palace, this Court dealt with, among other things, violations of the Royal Prerogative and issues for which there was no applicable law. It dates from before the Tudor period, but Henry VII., strengthened its powers. It had public hearings but no jury. It was typically speedier than the Common Courts, so people would petition to hear their cases heard there.

A letter to  
Sir R. Martin. Anthony Ashley. Mr. Alderman Buckle.

There have been of late divers lewd and malicious libels set up within the city of London, among the which there is some set upon the wall of the Dutch Churchyard that doth exceed the rest in lewdness, and for the discovery of the author and publisher thereof her Majesty's pleasure is that some extraordinary pains and care be taken by the Commissioners appointed by the Lord Mayor for the examining such persons as may be in this case any way suspected.

These shall be therefore to require and authorize you to make search and apprehend every person so to be suspected, and for that purpose to enter into all houses and places where any such may be remaining, and upon their apprehension to make like search in any the chambers, studies, chests or other like places for all manner of writings or papers that may give you light for the discovery of the libellers.

And after you shall have examined the persons, if you shall find them duly to be suspected and they shall refuse to confess the truth, you shall by authority hereof put them to the torture in Bridewell, and by the extremity thereof, to be used at such times and as often as you shall think fit, draw them to discover their knowledge concerning the said libels.

We pray you herein to use your uttermost travel and endeavour, to the end the author of these seditious libels may be known and they punished according to their deserts, and this shall be your sufficient warrant.

## VI

Whilst the above was being attended to, Henry Maunder, a secret Agent, was sent to Thomas Walsingham's house in Scadbury to arrest Marlowe. The reason for the arrest follows. Original spelling has been retained:

"In 1593, a certain enemy of Marlowe's one Richard Bame, [Baine] laid information against him before the Privy Council for expressing atheistical opinions and for using blasphemous words, a catalogue of which Bame [Baine] drew up. The poet evaded the charge by leaving town; on May 18 a warrant was issued to bring him to the Court. This informer, [Baines] was hanged at Tyburn in 1594 for a degrading offence."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Webb & Beckwith. *The History of Chislehurst, its Church, Manors, and Parish*, 1899.



The secret Agent, Thomas Drury, of the Inner Temple,<sup>30</sup> delivered the above-mentioned Note that Baines had written to the Privy Council. This was ordered May 11, 1593, by Burghley, Whitgift, Buckhurst, Puckering, and second Commissioners Phelippes and Waad.

Marlowe's roommate, Thomas Kyd,<sup>31</sup> and Baines gave written depositions against Marlowe prior his assassination.

Who was Baines? He was a Cambridge boy, born in 1554 wrote a memorandum that found its way into the authorities' hands just before Marlowe's assassination in May 1593. We find from two accounts (given below) that Baines was hanged in 1594:

"He [Baines] was hanged at Tyburn December 6, 1594. We know not his offence. The fact that he suffered the extreme penalty of the law appears by the register of the Stationers' Company, which records the entry to Thomas Gosson and William Blackwell of a ballad entitled the *Wofull lamentacion of Richard Banes executed at Tybone the 6 of December 1594.*"<sup>32</sup>

"The blackest indictment against Marlowe's character is that written by a man named Bame, [Baines] who was probably bribed by the Puritans, and whose veracity is further impugned by the damaging fact that he was afterwards hanged at Tyburn."<sup>33</sup>

Twelve days before Marlowe's death, the Privy Council sends an Agent (Henry Maunder) to apprehend Marlowe at Thomas Walsingham's house in Chislehurst.

"There is nothing to show why Marlowe's presence was required by the Privy Council, the records of which State department show that no crime was too important, or offence too trivial, at that period to escape its cognizance; but that it had nothing to do with the charges imputed in Kyd's alleged letter is certain, as that was confessedly written after the poet's death."<sup>34</sup>

Here is the Note that allegedly triggered Marlowe's arrest and consequently brought on his death. Original spelling has been kept.

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<sup>30</sup> Lansdowne MS., 76, No. 20.

<sup>31</sup> *b.1558–d.1594.*

<sup>32</sup> Cooper & Cooper. *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, Vol. II., 1858.

<sup>33</sup> Lewis. *Christopher Marlowe Outlines*, 1891.

<sup>34</sup> Ingram. *Marlowe and his Poetry*, 1914.

The Baines Note  
May 1593<sup>35</sup>  
Containing the Opinion of one Christopher Marlye  
Concerning his Damnable Opinions and Judgment  
Of Religion and Scorn of God's Word.

That the Indians and many authors of antiquity have assuredly written of above sixteen thousand years ago, where Adam is proved to have lived within six thousand years.

He *affirmeth*<sup>36</sup> that Moses was but a Juggler<sup>37</sup> and that one Heriots [Thomas Hariot, being Raleigh's man,] can do more than he.

That Moses made the Jews to travel forty years in the wilderness, (which Journey might have been done in less than one year) ere they came to the Promised Land, to the intent that those who were privy to most of his subtiles might perish, and so an everlasting superstition remain in the hearts of the people.

That the first beginning of Religion was only to keep men in awe.

That it was an easy matter for Moses being brought up in all the arts of the Egyptians to abuse the Jews being a rude and gross people.

That Christ was a bastard and his mother dishonest.

That he was the son of a carpenter, and that if the Jews among whom he was born did crucify him they best knew him and whence he came.

That Christ deserved better to die then Barabbas and that the Jews made a good choice, though Barabbas were both a thief and murderer.

That if there be any god or any good religion, then it is in the papists because the service of god is performed with more ceremonies, as elevation of the mass, organs, singing men, shaven crowns &cetera.

That all Protestants are hypocritical asses.

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<sup>35</sup> As originally submitted in the Harley MS., 6853 f. 320.

<sup>36</sup> The words printed in italics have been scored through in the MS.

<sup>37</sup> In Dr. William Rawley's *Notebook*, an anecdote had evidently never been told outside the most intimate circle, and Rawley thought it better, even in this case, to enter it curiously [cautiously] in his notebook. The words read: "He [Bacon] thought Moses was the greatest sinner that was, for he never knew any break both tables at once but he." To consider Moses a sinner who broke all the Ten Commandments at once, was a thought, which, in the year 1626, it was wise to express in a secret (veiled) language, by means of a cipher.

That if he were put to write a new religion, he would undertake both a more excellent and admirable method and that all the New Testament is filthily written.

That the woman of Samaria and her sister were whores and that Christ knew them dishonestly.

That St. John the Evangelist was bedfellow to Christ and leaned always in his bosom, that he used him as the sinners of Sodom.

That all they that love not Tobacco and Boys were fools.

That all the apostles were fishermen and base fellows neither of wit nor worth that Paul only had wit but he was a timorous fellow in bidding men to be subject to Magistrates against his conscience.

That he had as good right to coin as the Queen of England, and that he was acquainted with one Pole a prisoner in Newgate who hath great skill in mixture of metals and having learned some things of him he meant through help of a cunning stamp maker to coin French Crowns pistolets and English shillings.

That if Christ would have instituted the sacrament with more Ceremonial Reverence it would have been had in more admiration that it would have been much better being administered in a Tobacco pipe.

That the Angel Gabriel was bawd to the Holy Ghost, because he brought the salutation to Mary.

That one Richard Cholmley hath confessed that he was persuaded by Marlowe's reasons to become an Atheist. (Marginal note: *he is layd for.*) [In Burghley's handwriting]

These things, with many other shall by good and honest witness be approved to be his opinions and common speeches, and that this Marlowe doth not only hold them himself, but almost into every company he cometh he persuades men to Atheism willing them not to be afeard of bugbears and hobgoblins, and utterly scorning both God and his Ministers as Richard Baines will justify and approve both by mine oath and the testimony of many honest men, and almost all men with whom he hath conversed anytime will testify the same, and as I think all men in Christianity ought to endeavour that the mouth of so dangerous a member may be stopped, he saith likewise that he hath quoted a number of contrarities out of the Scripture which he hath given to some great men who in convenient time shall be named. When these things shall be called in question the witness shall be produced.

## VII

No doubt Baine's Note is damning for Marlowe. It contains from counterfeiting to having in his possession high ranked official names of who were Atheists. All of these manuscripts are always spoken

of as original genuine documents of the period in which the poet lived, even by those writers who question the truth of the statements ascribed to Baines, although Baker (writer of the Harleian Collection) himself asserts that they were copies of the originals made in his own handwriting. Reference has been made in this research to various MSS., such as the Harleian Collection in the British Museum. But are they original?

A large portion of the Harleian Collection was purchased by Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, from the well-known non-juror named Thomas Baker, a fellow of St. John's College (Cambridge). These MSS., which are bound in several large volumes, consist of many documents of surpassing literary and political interest, documents which Baker declared in his will 'were of my own handwriting' having been copied from originals, none of which originals are now known to be in existence.

A further fifteen of these folio volumes were devised to St. John's College and the MSS., in them are likewise averred by Baker, to be all in his handwriting. When Bennet, the editor of Ascham's *English Works* complained that these documents 'are unskillfully transcribed,' Masters, in explanation pointed out that this is due to 'their being copied from the original according to the old way of spelling.'<sup>38</sup> Surely this is sufficient evidence to prove that the MSS., in question are not original, but only copies by Baker.

Having disposed of their originality, the next thing is to examine their authenticity: are they really copies of veritable old documents, or are they merely forgeries such as Collier, Henry-Ireland, and many others, have foisted on the literary world? If one MS., prove fictitious, the whole collection must be regarded with strong suspicion.

Baker is known to have been an indefatigable collector of antiquities; saturated with literary lore, especially of the Elizabethan period, and always able and willing to supply historical students with just such items of information as they needed. Many of his lucky discoveries have been embodied in standard works, and may, in these days, be capable of corroboration, but from where Baker obtained them is a mystery to this day. As is also a mystery what became of the results of Baker's many years of secluded study; of the wonderful works he was to produce, but which he died without accomplishing. Does not the wording of his will provide the key to the enigma?

The MSS., Baker bequeathed to St. John's College in Cambridge, have been carefully catalogued: they make a marvelous collection. Many of them are by persons as unknown to history as Chatterton's *Rowley*; several furnish particulars of celebrities nowhere else recorded; whilst others are unknown pieces by known persons. There is something strange or unique about most of them. Occasionally it is noted of a manuscript that 'Baker thinks' it is in such a person's own writing, although later on, in his will, he declared the whole contents of these large folio volumes are all in his own handwriting.

The Baines Note has been referred to by some authors as being the production of an enemy to Marlowe, and its charges against him as being unworthy of credit, seeing that whilst some are ludicrously improbable, others are in direct conflict with his known words and opinions; but no one apparently has regarded the Note as a forgery and of a much more recent date than the Elizabethan epoch. The

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<sup>38</sup> Ingram. *Christopher Marlowe and his Associates*, 1904.

authenticity of the document is made susceptible by many circumstances, and we offer here Ingram's opinion on it:<sup>39</sup>

"Many noteworthy alterations and cancellations have been made in the wording of this draft, [Baines' Note] and especially in the heading; the original heading has been struck through, and the following words substituted for it: A Note delivered on Whitsun eve last of the most horrible blasphemes uttered by Christofer Marly who within in days after came to a sudden and fearful end of his life.

"A very remarkable item to be regarded in this Note is that as a matter of fact Marlowe was dead and buried before Whitsun eve! Whitsun eve 1593, occurred on the second of June, and the poet was buried in the churchyard of St. Nicholas, Deptford, on the first of that month!

"On the face of it, it would appear as if the forger had forgotten the leap-years, even as he who forged the letter from Peele to Marlowe, in the Lansdowne Collection, misdated it two years after the poet's death!

"The body of this first draft of the Note imports that it is an affidavit by Richard Borne, but the signature is Rychard Baine. The diversity of spelling at that period was phenomenal, but the orthography of this Note is as suspiciously pseudo-antique as is that of many of the ballads in Percy's *Reliques*.

"Professor F. S. Boas has brought to light amongst the Harleian MSS., bought from Baker, another and apparently an amended copy of the Note, although he regards it as the original of the Baines Libel. It is a little better devised, as if written more leisurely than the other; it introduces the name of Sir Walter Raleigh as the patron of Hariot, and gives the name in the body of the Note, as well as for the signature, most distinctly as Richard Baines.

"This so-called Note ascribes all kinds of criminal offences, both civil and theological, to Marlowe; and that it may be seen of what nature its contents are. As nothing in connection with this Note happened it was necessary, if any use were made of it, by sale or gift, to explain the reason, and therefore the 'sudden and fearful end of his life' was endorsed on the draft.

"The two other remarkable documents bearing upon the subject of Marlowe's life and opinions are among the manuscripts in the Harleian Collection 'purchased from Mr. Baker.' Both the letter purporting to have been written to Sir John Puckering by Thomas Kyd (although the signature to it is unlike the authentic signature by him in Lambeth Palace Library) and the theological treatise

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<sup>39</sup> Ingram. *Christopher Marlowe and his Associates*, 1904.

have already been commented upon, and the reader who is unable to compare these manuscripts with one another, or with genuine documents of the period, must judge by these comments.

“It may be stated that the watermarks in the paper of all four of these documents bear a suspicious family resemblance to each other, a fact which corroborates Baker’s declaration that they are all in his own handwriting, and indicates they are all on paper belonging to one individual.

“It may be justly asked, if these are copies, what has become of the originals from which they were copied; and what caused the discrepancies between the two copies of the Note? If the Note be really a genuine state document, why was a variant of it made, and why is neither copy dated, nor attested, nor witnessed, nor addressed to anyone, nor has, apparently, been executed in the presence of any experienced legal functionary; nor furnishes the year of the Queen’s Reign, as all official documents would do; nor why ‘her H’ (if Highness be intended) is used for the Sovereign, seeing that since Henry VIII., had replaced the former title by ‘Majesty’ the latter had been always used, at least officially; nor why a contemporary did not know when Whitsun took place; nor why the spelling is occasionally modern; nor how many other suspicious particulars can be explained.

“It is singular that Kyd should be so careful to relate all the various circumstances of his own case in writing to the Lord Keeper, who must have been fully conversant with them already; but it is a pity, if the letter be genuine, that he so carefully avoided naming the nobleman for whom he and Marlowe had worked and whose sympathy on his behalf he now wished Puckering to arouse.

“The most extraordinary thing of all this is that none of the persons referred to by Kyd’s letter appears to have been punished or even tried for these allegations. The more the matter is investigated, the more improbable does the indictment appear: with all the facts, as now set forth before us, can any credence be given (not to the statements of the Baines Libel, for they have all along been regarded as palpably false and absurd) to the belief that these documents were written by the persons alleged and at the period stated?”

Ingram has a point in being in such disbelief after the plethora forgeries by Collier, Cunningham and young William-Henry Ireland; the only answer we may offer here, is that the entire fairytale of Marlowe’s death, including the circumstances that were portrayed then, was an elaborate cover up of their actions to assassinate Marlowe. But let us see what Marlowe’s roommate was saying back then.

## VIII

### Thomas Kyd's Accusations on Christopher Marlowe<sup>40</sup>

Pleaseth it your Honourable Lordship touching Marlowe's monstrous opinions as I but with an aggrieved conscience think on him or them so can I but particularize few in the respect of them that kept him greater company, howbeit in discharge of duty both towards God your Lordships and the world thus much have I thought good briefly to discover in all humbleness.

First it was his custom when I knew him first and as I hear said he continued it in table talk or otherwise to jest at the divine Scriptures gibes at prayers, and strive in argument to frustrate and confute what hath been spoke or writ by prophets and such holy men.

He would report St. John to be our savoir Christ's Alexis I cover it with reverence and trembling that is that Christ did love him with an extraordinary love.

That for me to write a poem of St. Paul's conversion as I was determined he said would be as if I should go write a book of fast and loose, esteeming Paul a Juggler.

That the prodigal Child's portion was but fewer nobles, he held his purse so near the bottom in all pictures, and that it either was a jest or else fowl nobles then was thought a great patrimony not thinking it a parable.

That things esteemed to be done by divine power might have as well been done by observation of men all which he would so suddenly take slight occasion to slip out as I, and many others, in regard of his other rashness in attempting sudden privy injuries to men did over slip though often reprehend him for it and for which God is my witness as well by my Lord's commandment as in hatred of his life and thoughts I left and did refrain his company.

He would persuade with men of quality to go unto the King of Scots whether I hear Royden is gone and where if he had lived he told me when I saw him last he meant to be.

It is very interesting that Kyd mentions King James. Ironic even, for it is well documented that Robert Cecil was secretly writing to James prior to Elizabeth's death in order to bring the Scottish King to England. There is another letter written by Kyd after Marlowe's assassination, where he tries to reason why he was suspected as being Marlowe's partner. There is no doubt that Kyd, when arrested, underwent

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<sup>40</sup> BL Harley MS. 6848 f.154.

the trials of torture to confess whatever it was Elizabeth's Privy Council needed in order they arrange so false a story that could be fed to the British public so Marlowe's death be justified. Before giving Kyd's next letter, we once again quote from Ingram:

"The facts of the fatal incidents are involved in mystery. According to the account given some years later by William Vaughan, a certain man had invited Marlowe 'thither to a feast, and was then playing at draughts,' when, for some unspecified reason, he was attacked by the poet, who was so severely wounded by his opponent's dagger that he shortly after died.'<sup>41</sup>

Thomas Kyd's letter to Sir John Puckering, Knight,  
Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England  
June 1593<sup>42</sup>

At my last being with your Lordship to entreat some speeches from you in my favour to my Lord, [Strange,] who (though I think he rest not doubtful of mine innocence) hath yet in his discrete judgment feared to offend in his retaining me, without your honours former privacy; so is it now right honourable that the denial of that favour (to my thought reasonable) hath moved me to conjecture some suspicion, that your Lordship holds me in, concerning Atheism a deadly thing which I was undeserved charged withal and therefore have I thought it requisite, as well in duty to your Lordship and the laws, as also in the fear of God and freedom of my conscience, therein to satisfy the world and you. The first and most (thought insufficient surmise) that ever as therein might be raised of me grew thus.

When I was first suspected for that libel that concerned the State, amongst those waste and idle papers (which I care not for) and which unmasked I did deliver up, were found some fragments of a disputation touching that opinion, affirmed by Marlowe to be his, and shuffled with some of mine (unknown to me) by some occasion of our writing in one chamber two years since.

My first acquaintance with this Marlowe, rose upon his bearing name to serve my Lord although his Lordship never knew his service, but in writing for his players, for never could my Lord endure his name, or sight, when he had heard of his conditions, nor would indeed the form of divine prayer used duly in his Lordship's house have quadred with such reprobates.

That I should love or be familiar fiend, with one so irreligious, were very rare. When Tullie saith *digni sunt amicitia quibus in ipsis inest causa cur diligentur*, [those whom there is reason to esteem are worthy of friendship,] which neither was in him, for person, qualities, nor honesty, besides he was intemperate and of a cruel heart, the very contraries to which, my greatest enemies will say by me.

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<sup>41</sup> Ingram. *Marlowe and his Poetry*, 1914.

<sup>42</sup> Preserved in the Harleian MSS. are endorsed on the back, 12 May 1593.



It is not to be numbered amongst the best conditions of men, to tax or to upbraid the dead *quia mortui non mordent*. [because the dead do not bite.]

But thus much have I (with your Lordship's favour) dared in the greatest cause, which is to clear myself of being thought an Atheist, which some will say he was.

For more assurance that I was not of that vile opinion, let it but please your Lordship to enquire of such as he conversed withal, that is (as I am given to understand) with Hariot, Warner, Royden, and some stationers in Paul's Churchyard, whom I in no sort can accuse nor will excuse by reason of his company, of whose consent if I had been no question but I also should have been of their consort, for *ex minimo vestigio artifex agnoscit artificem*. [an artist recognizes an artist by the slightest trace.]

Of my religion and life I have already given some instance to the late Commissioners and of my reverend meaning to the state, although perhaps my pains and undeserved tortures felt by some, would have engendered more impatience when less by far hath driven so many *imo extra caulas* [nay, outside the sheepfold] which it shall never do with me.

But whatsoever I have felt right honourable this is my request not for reward but in regard of my true innocence that it would please your Lordship so to the same and me, as I may still retain the favours of my Lord, whom I have served almost these six years now, in credit until now, and now am utterly undone without herein be somewhat done for my recovery.

For I do know his Lordship holds your honours and the state in that due reverence, as he would no way move the least suspicion of his loves and cares both towards her sacred Majesty your Lordship's and the laws whereof when time shall serve I shall give greater instance which I have observed.

As for the libel laid unto my charge I am resolved with receiving of the sacrament to satisfy your Lordship and the world that I was neither Agent nor consenting thereunto. How be it if some outcast Ismael for want of his own dispose to lewdness, have with pretext of duty or religion, or to reduce himself to that he was not born unto by any way incensed your Lordship to suspect me, I shall beseech in all humility and in the fear of God that it will please your Lordship but to censure me as I shall prove myself, and to repute them as they are indeed. *Cum totius iniustitia nulla capitalior sit quam eorum, qui tum cum maxime fallunt id agunt ut viri boni esse videantur*. [There is no more capital injustice than that of those men who strive to seem good at the time they are being particularly deceitful.]

For doubtless even then your Lordship shall be sure to break their lewd designs and see into the truth, when but their lives that herein have accused me shall be examined and ripped up effectually, so may I chance with Paul to live and shake the viper off my hand into the fire for which the ignorant suspect me guilty of the former shipwreck.

And thus (for now I fear me I grow tedious) assuring your good Lordship that if I knew any whom I could justly accuse of that damnable offence to the awful Majesty of God or of that other mutinous sedition toward the state I would as willingly reveal them as I would request your Lordship's better thoughts of me that never have offended you.

Your Lordship's most humble in all duties.

*Th. Kydde*

Although the letter just given is undated in the original, it was assumed to have been written in the summer of 1593, at some point after June 1; this however, is the merest conjecture, as there is no clue whatever to the date of its composition.

We read in the letter that Kyd is represented as referring to his arrest on the suspicion of being the author of, or concerned in the production of, a libel that concerned the State and as having his room ransacked for incriminating matter. What was discovered amongst his papers is supposed to have given rise to his having been further suspected of atheism.

How readily the designation of atheist was bestowed at this time by one man upon another whose political, even as well as religious, opinions differed from his own, has been referred to by many historians; but when this accusation involved a charge against a person of disbelieving in religion as established by law, or by the Queen's authority, the charge was regarded as most heinous, and, if proved, was punishable by death. Death by an executioner on a scaffold and not by a fellow Agent in a tavern; but proved in a Court of law beyond reasonable doubt. This did not happen to Marlowe if he was accused of atheism.

The letter ascribed to Kyd contains several Latin quotations written in an italicized handwriting differing from the rest of the document; and this italicized script is apparently that of the writer of the fragments, as a comparison will prove to any unprejudiced person. The last fragment was apparently signed, but, either by accident or intention, the signature has been torn off, or perhaps worn off, and only the first letter of it, either K or R, now remains. So Marlowe may be acquitted of the authorship of the theological disputation.

## IX

Another secret Agent called Drury was under pressure; he also needed some attention from his bosses, as Kyd did. They had done their duty to assist in Marlowe's destruction; they were now being swept aside and hence the following letter:

Thomas Drury's Letter to Anthony Bacon  
August 1, 1593<sup>43</sup>

Sir,

The true love that I have ever born to your honourable father [Nicholas] as also to all his house hath forced me to single you out for many virtuous actions and desires that I know and hear to be in you to unfold as late accidents which are within my knowledge and for brevity sake and for avoiding you further trouble with such circumstance thus standeth the matters.

There was a command laid on me lately to stay one Mr. Bayns [Baines] which did use to resort unto me which I did pursue in time although then I did not so much as imagine where he was, I found him ought and got the desired secret at his hand. For which the city of London promised as also by proclamation was promised a hundred Crowns but not a penny performed and a fine evasion made.

After there was a libel by my means found ought and delivered an old book also by my deciphering taken and a notable villain or two which are close prisoners and [might] had matters against them of an exceeding nature and yet no reward but all the credit pulled ought of my mouth and I robbed of all.

Then after all this there was by my only means set down unto the Lord Keeper and the Lord of Buckhurst the notablist and violist are tickles of Atheism that I suppose the like were never known or read of in any age all which I can show unto you they were delivered to her Highness and command given by herself to prosecute it to the full but no recompense, no not of a penny.

Since that time there is old hold and shoe for to get the book that doeth maintain this damnable sect which book I presume there would be given great sums for and large promises offered in like manor but none of those will I trust but if I may secretly confer with you I and on that I have brought with me a merchant will give you such light as he and I can bring you to the man that doeth know who did write the book and they to how it was delivered as also who read the lecture and where and when with diverse such other secrets as the state would spend £1.000 to know and a better penny as himself affirmeth which man himself I can bring forth in love to you if he may be but buckled and rewarded, I can in like manor revel unto you an Alderman or two that do convey over money to the enemy and get named unto you their poisoned factors. In like manner, I can tell you of such a devise intended against the state by a Captain as never was heard of the like as I think.

I know I am not gras[iu]s in the sight of your brother [Francis] therefore if it please you either to [R]ake your coch or nage I will attend you and declare the rest of my mind and bring a right honest merchant with me which shall justify upon his other all that I have set down [and] I presume you shall know such a

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<sup>43</sup> Lambeth Palace Library, *Bacon Papers* MS., 649 f. 246.

secret if you please to hear me a little and go on my way because I know the nature of the party as you have not been possessed of a good while.

Now Sir, I have used a faithful heart to you; I have given you the onset of this action which is notably sought after so use me and my friend as we may have cause to pray for you, and after you shall be possessed of the matters so recommend our services to the Lord Treasurer [Burghley] as we may receive sum reward and favour in his sight and thus praying to God for you with a unified heart until I speak with you or know your pleasure I [am] staying at the waterside until I hear from you in Richmond said the first August.

Yours in all duty to command.

*Thomas Drury*

Did Anthony Bacon, then an Agent to the Earl of Essex, meet with Drury? If he did, it is not mentioned in Anthony Bacon's correspondence.

Was this 'old book' that seemed to hold significant material and also who the author was, really exist? Could it be the Shakespeare First Folio? Remember, dates in those days were not to be relied upon, either in letters or printed material. Whatever date was printed on a frontispiece held no proof that the material was indeed printed in the year stated. There is abundant evidence of this that have come down to us through the historical records of literature. But it seems Drury sends another letter, two in fact, this time to Cecil. Let's read them:

Letter from Thomas Drury to Sir Robert Cecil  
August, 1593 <sup>44</sup>

I am committed from my Lord Chamberlain for abusing him unto you, as also for wicked speeches that could say I was able to make any Counsellor a traitor: only this I do presume, that I told your honour it was others' practices and lies also and not my own, neither did so name it but that *exempli gratia*, how it might be so done to all mortal men, and so I presume it will be said by you.

If I have done you anything worthy of this rebuke, or have said or done that might deserve imprisonment, let it come with death rather than with favour. If my deserts be thus rewarded it will teach others more wit. Alas Sir, why was I not committed by your own good hands which would have delivered me upon true cause? My Lord Chamberlain is too continually bent against me; his displeasure is everlasting and so is my misery. Banish me forever as my Lord thinketh meet, and I shall be bound to you, for if truth may take no place nor true meaning, farewell country, life and all.

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<sup>44</sup> HMC *Cecil* Vol. IV., PP. 366, 367.

Letter from Thomas Drury to Sir Robert Cecil  
August 17, 1593<sup>45</sup>

In all duty and lowliness of heart I most humbly thank your Honour for your liberality, as also for my liberty. [It seems that Cecil intervened after Drury's previous letter.] My Lord's pleasure was that I should be freely discharged from the prison; howbeit, they stay my cloak for the charges of the House.

I received your honourable letter, but if my Lord Chamberlain do detain my writings, I cannot anyway make an end. The stay of my writings hath been my utter undoing. I most humbly beseech your Honour to speak unto my Lord for them, for I dare not speak unto his Lordship, nor any friend I have.

It pleased your Honour to promise me to speak unto the Lord Keeper that I should sue *in forma pauperis*; which licence I would most humbly beseech your Honour to procure me, now before my departure.

In like manner, I humbly pray your Honour to speak unto my Lord Chamberlain, to speak unto Sir Edmond and his son, to pay me the £100 I lent him, as also the £40 I lent unto my Lady his wife. Besides, I paid for velvet and other silks £30 for him and my Lady. I have, upon his entreaty, because I would not hinder the sale of his land, delivered him all his assurances again, and in my life I never received back again the value of £20.

And, gracious Sir, I do but desire to have but one suit of apparel of his old, and a couple of shirts, and what money either my Lord his father, or yourself shall judge, and I will give him a general acquittance for, so God help me. I have borrowed my cloak, and neither have shirt, doublet nor hose, that scant will cover my nakedness, and only that money I have had by your honourable means, is that must be my greatest comfort, under God, for a great season.

Thus, presuming of your honourable inclination to pity my miserable estate, because it hath pleased my Lord of Buckhurst and your Honour, that I should by writing acquaint your Honour with my bad and ruined estate, and not by coming, I humbly present my suit, in all humility craving your honourable speedy answer; for this town will consume me, it is so excessive dear.

X

We see that Cecil got Drury released, either by Anthony Bacon's intervention, which we believe so, or by the knowledge that Drury was portraying he knew of Baines the instigator of Marlowe's death. If the infamous 'old book' mentioned by Drury was given to Cecil or Anthony Bacon, we will never know, nor will we ever know of its content.

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<sup>45</sup> HMC *Cecil* Vol. IV., PP. 357-8.

By this time, spies were defecting to serve Essex to whom Burghley loses key officers such as William Waad, Thomas Phelippes, and Anthony Bacon. Essex sets up a secret service of his own, under the direction of Anthony Bacon, [Robert] Cecil's first cousin; and Thomas Phelippes, the decipherer, apparently carried on for a time extensive investigations on his own account. Thomas Phelippes, whose name little known to the casual reader, as we have seen, is familiar to every student of the period. Half the dark secrets of the time lay buried within the compass of that strange man's knowledge.

We have stated that Phelippes worked for Walsingham, for Burghley and for his son Robert. He was an invaluable auxiliary, deciphering, perhaps counterfeiting the crabbed allusive script in which men stowed their plots. But the secret of his own life has never been read, and we feel him only as an obscure, yet powerful presence, not as we feel the touch of human flesh and blood. If Phelippes was the brain of the great system of espionage over which Walsingham and Cecil presided, Richard Topcliffe, the gaoler of the Gate-House Prison, was its hand. He writes to Cecil in regard to the Catholics:

"You cannot believe that disloyalty we simple Commissioners do see by their fury expressed, being put to trial. And that is our grief, and mine especially, that we are often taken to be cruel. But God is the witness of all."<sup>46</sup>

The Walsinghams appeared innocent and devoted to Elizabeth, gaining her trust and favours while doing all they could for James of Scotland. Duplicity was to bring manors and new wealth to the Walsinghams; rewards to Ingram Frizer the alleged assassin of Marlowe; and high office to Sydney the bearer of gifts, as soon as James came to England's throne in 1603. One or two of the Privy Council, of which one was Cecil, also played this double game. Burghley & Son already knew that Anthony Bacon and Essex were in contact with Agents in Scotland, and that Agents in Scotland had had contacts with the Duke of Parma.

## XI

It is probably fact the Robert Cecil had Marlowe assassinated since Cecil would be the man to nudge the Queen's response by controlling the movement of documents we read below. We have seen the letter written from Drury to Anthony Bacon stating that the Queen requests and gives an order that Cholmeley's 'Atheism' be prosecuted to the full and also hints that he can offer more information on the Queen's actions since Anthony is now Essex's Director of Intelligence; Essex was made Privy Councillor, one of her formal circle of advisers. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* staged with audiences rising to 2.000 and on September 30, *Faustus* is first performed by the Lord Admiral's Men at the Rose Theatre. *The Jew of Malta* also performed at The Rose, boosting its performances with the Lopez execution on June 7, 1594.

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<sup>46</sup> Hatfield Cal., V., P. 91.

The following documents, after presenting the reader with the above facts, can be said to have been arranged for the public to justify Marlowe's assassination. The alleged assassin Frizer, just four weeks after Marlowe's burial, was pardoned by Queen Elizabeth I.

Chancery proceeding on Marlowe's assassination  
Calendar of the Miscellany of the Chancery

Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland, Queen Defender of the Faith and to our well beloved William Danby, Gentleman, Coroner of our household, greeting. Wishing for certain causes to be certified upon an indictment made in your presence concerning the death of Christopher Morley, upon view of the body of the same Christopher, at Detforde Strande in our County of Kent within the verge lying dead and slain, whence a certain Ingram ffrysar, late of London, Gentleman, is indicted (as by the record thence remaining with you it fully appears) and whether the same Ingram slew the aforesaid Christopher in self-defense, and not feloniously or of malice aforethought, so that in no otherwise could he avoid his own death, or not. We command you to send the tenor of the indictment aforesaid with everything touching it and whatsoever names, the parties aforesaid in that indictment are known by, to us in our Chancery under your seal distinctly and openly without delay, and with this writ. Witness myself at Westminster on the 15th day of June in the year of our Reign the thirty-fifth.

*Powle.*

[Endorsed] The tenor of the record mentioned in this writ appears in a certain inquisition annexed to this writ. Return of William Danby, Coroner of the household, to our Lady the Queen.

Inquisition  
Marlowe's Assassination  
Returned by William Danby Coroner of the Household Kent

Inquisition indented taken at Detford Strand in the aforesaid County of Kent within the verge on the first day of June in the year of the Reign of Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland, Queen defender of the faith and thirty-fifth, in the presence of William Danby, Gentleman, Coroner of the household of our said Lady the Queen, upon view of the body of Christopher Morley, there lying dead and slain, upon oath of Nicholas Draper, Gentleman, Wolstan Randall, Gentleman, William Curry, Adrian Walker, John Barber, Robert Baldwyn, Giles Field, George Halfepenny, Henry Awger, James Batt, Henry Bendyn, Thomas Batt senior, John Baldwyn, Alexander Burrage, Edmund Goodcheepe, and Henry Dabyns.

Who say [upon] their oath that when a certain Ingram ffrysar, late of London, Gentleman, and the aforesaid Christopher Morley and one Nicholas Skeres, late of London, Gentleman, and Robert Poley of London aforesaid, Gentleman, on the thirtieth day of May in the thirty-fifth year above named, at Detford

Strand aforesaid in the said County of Kent within the verge, about the tenth hour before noon of the same day, met together in a room in the house of a certain Eleanor Bull, widow.

And there passed the time together and dined and after dinner were in quiet sort together there and walked in the garden belonging to the said house until the sixth hour after noon of the same day and then returned from the said garden to the room aforesaid and there together and in company supped, and after supper the said Ingram and Christopher Morley were in speech and uttered one to the other divers malicious words for the reason that they could not be at one nor agree about the payment of the sum of pence, that is, *le recknynge*, [the reckoning,] there, and the said Christopher Morley then lying upon a bed in the room where they supped, and moved with anger against the said Ingram ffrysar upon the words as aforesaid spoken between them, and the said Ingrain then and there sitting in the room aforesaid with his back towards the bed where the said Christopher Morley was then lying, sitting near the bed, that is, near the bed, and with the front part of his body towards the table and the aforesaid Nicholas Skeres and Robert Poley sitting on either side of the said Ingram in such a manner, that the same Ingram ffrysar in no wise could take flight.

It so befell that the said Christopher Morley on a sudden and of his malice towards the said Ingram aforethought, then and there maliciously drew the dagger of the said Ingram which was at his back, and with the same dagger the said Christopher Morley then and there maliciously gave the aforesaid Ingram two wounds on his head of the length of two inches and of the depth of a quarter of an inch; whereupon the said Ingram, in fear of being slain, and sitting in the manner aforesaid between the said Nicholas Skeres and Robert Poley so that he could not in any wise get away, in his own defense and for the saving of his life, then and there struggled with the said Christopher Morley to get back from him his dagger aforesaid; in which affray the same Ingram could not get away from the said Christopher Morley; and so it befell in that affray that the said Ingram, in defense of his life, with the dagger aforesaid of the value of 12*d.* gave the said Christopher then and there a mortal wound over his right eye of the depth of two inches and of the width of one inch; of which mortal wound the aforesaid Christopher Morley then and there instantly died.

And so the Jurors aforesaid say upon their oath that the said Ingram killed and slew Christopher Morley aforesaid on the thirtieth day of May in the thirty-fifth year named above at Detford Strand aforesaid within the verge in the room aforesaid within the verge in the manner and form aforesaid in the defense and saving of his own life, against the peace of our said Lady the Queen, her now Crown and dignity; and further the said Jurors say upon their oath that the said Ingram after the slaying aforesaid perpetrated and done by him in the manner and form aforesaid neither fled nor withdrew himself; but what goods or chattels, lands or tenements the said Ingram had at the time of the slaying aforesaid, done and perpetrated by him in the manner and form aforesaid, the said Jurors are totally ignorant.



In witness of which thing the said Coroner as well as the Jurors aforesaid to this Inquisition have interchangeably set their seals. Given the day and year above named &c.

By William Danby  
*Coroner.*

The object of Marlowe's imagined 'lewd love' in Meres' abstract below, is noticeably absent from the picture in the Inquisition just presented, both as a cause and as a witness of the fray. In spite of the wishes of Meres and his followers, she must now be returned with thanks to the fertile brain from which she sprang.

Extract from *Palladis Tamia*  
By  
Francis Meres (1598)

As Jodelle, a French tragical poet, being an epicure and an atheist, made a pitiful end, so our tragical poet Marlowe, for his epicurism and atheism had a tragical death; you may read of this Marlowe more at large in the *Theatre of God's Judgments*, in the 25. Chapter entreating of epicures and atheists.

As the poet Lycophron was shot to death by a certain rival of his, so Christopher Marlowe was stabbed to death by a bawdy serving-man, a rival of his in his lewd love.

The Enrolment of the Pardon  
To one Ingram ffrisar<sup>47</sup>

And so that the said Ingram killed and slew Christopher Morley aforesaid at Detford Strand aforesaid in our said County of Kent within the verge in the room aforesaid within the verge in the manner and form aforesaid in the defense and saving of his own life, against our peace our Crown and dignity. As more fully appears by the tenor of the Record of the Inquisition aforesaid which we caused to come before us in our Chancery by virtue of our writ.

We therefore moved by piety have pardoned the same Ingram ffrisar the breach of our peace which pertains to us against the said Ingram for the death above mentioned and grant to him our firm peace provided nevertheless that the right remain in our Court if anyone should wish to complain of him concerning the death above mentioned. In testimony and Witness the Queen at Kewe on the 28th day of June.

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<sup>47</sup> "The Queen 28th day of June granted pardon to Ingram ffrisar [sic. for homicide] in self-defense." This pardon was issued just four weeks after Marlowe's burial and can be found in the Index and Calendar of the Patent Rolls for 35 Elizabeth.

Ingram Frizer's Pardon  
28 June 1594  
From the Queen to all her Officers and Loyal Subjects

By means of a certain Inquisition indented taken at Deptford Strand in our County of Kent within the verge on the first day of last June aforesaid in the presence of William Danby, Gentleman, Coroner of the household of our household, upon view of the body of Christopher Morley, there lying dead and slain, upon oath of Nicholas Draper, Gentleman, Wolstan Randall, Gentleman, William Curry, Adrian Walker, John Barber, Robert Baldwin, Giles ffeld, George HalfePENNY, Henry Awger, James Batt, Henry Bendin, Thomas Batt senior, John Baldwyn, Alexander Burrage, Edmund Goodcheepe, and Henry Dabyns. Who said upon oath that Ingram ffrysar, late of London, Gentleman, and the aforesaid Christopher Morley, and Nicholas Skeres, late of London, Gentleman, and Robert Poley of London aforesaid, Gentleman, on the thirtieth of May last aforesaid, at the aforesaid Detford Strand in our aforesaid County of Kent within the verge about the tenth hour before noon of the same day met together in a room in the house of a certain Eleanor Bull, widow.

And there passed the time together and dined and after dinner were in quiet sort together and walked in the garden belonging to the said house until the sixth hour after noon of the same day and then returned from the said garden to the room aforesaid and there together and in company supped.

And after supper the said Ingram and Christopher Morley were in speech and uttered one to the other divers malicious words for the reason that they could not be at one nor agree about the payment of the sum of pence, that is, *le Reckoninge*, there; and the said Christopher Morley then lying upon a bed in the room where they supped, and moved with anger against the said Ingram ffrysar upon the words aforesaid spoken between them, and the said Ingram then and there sitting in the room aforesaid with his back towards the bed where the said Christopher Morley was then lying, sitting near the bed, that is, *nere the Bedd*, and with the front part of his body towards the table and the aforesaid Nicholas Skeres and Robert Poley sitting on either side of the said Ingram in such a manner that the same Ingram ffrysar in no wise could take flight.

It so befell that the said Christopher Morley on a sudden and of his malice towards the said Ingram aforethought, then and there maliciously drew the dagger of the said Ingram which was at his back, and with the same dagger the said Christopher Morley then and there maliciously gave the aforesaid Ingram two wounds on his head of the length of two inches and of the depth of a quarter of an inch; whereupon the said Ingram, in fear of being slain, and sitting in the manner aforesaid between the said Nicholas Skeres and Robert Poley so that he could not in any wise get away, in his own defence and for the saving of his life, then and there struggled with the said Christopher Morley to get back from him his dagger aforesaid.

In which affray the same Ingram could not get away from the said Christopher Morley; and so it befell in that affray that the said Ingram, in defence of his life, with the dagger aforesaid to the value of twelve pence, gave the said Christopher then and there a mortal wound over his right eye of the depth of two inches and of the width of one inch; of which mortal wound the aforesaid Christopher Morley then and there instantly died.

And so that the said Ingram killed and slew Christopher Morley aforesaid on the thirtieth day of last May aforesaid at Detford Strande aforesaid in our said County of Kent within the verge in the room aforesaid within the verge in the manner and form aforesaid in the defence and saving of his own life against our peace our Crown and dignity.

As more fully appears by the tenor of the Record of the Inquisition aforesaid which we caused to come before us in our Chancery by virtue of our writ. We therefore moved by piety have pardoned the same Ingram ffrisar the breach of our peace which pertains to us against the said Ingram for the death above mentioned and grant to him our firm peace. Provided nevertheless that the right remain in our Court if anyone should wish to complain of him concerning the death above mentioned.

In testimony and witness the Queen at Kewe on the 28th day of June.

## XII

Upon Marlowe's death, the register of the parish church of St. Nicholas, Deptford, where he is buried, there appears the entry, which is ordinarily transcribed: "Christopher Marlow, slain by ffrancis<sup>48</sup> Archer 1 June 1593." An irregularity in the name of the slayer can be noticed; Vaughan had named him as one 'Ingram', whereas from the burial register D. Jones (Minister) read ffrancis Archer. Alexander Dyce, in his edition of *Marlowe* (1850, 1858), adopted the Archer reading, and he has been followed by the great majority of writers until Halliwell-Phillipps on examining the entry for himself, read the surname of the assailant as 'Frezer' [Fraser].<sup>49</sup>

*To be concluded in Part Two: The Motive*

### Resources

AIKIN Lucy.	Memoirs of the Court of Queen Elizabeth Volume I, II. Paternoster-Row	1819
ARBER Edward.	Fragmenta Regalia Southgate, London	1870

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<sup>48</sup> The double small letter 'f' was used in old writings to express the capital of that letter.

<sup>49</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.

BALLANTYNE.	Secret History of the Court and Times of James I Volume II. Ballantyne & Co.,	1811
BARLACE James G.	A Historical Sketch of the Progress of Knowledge in England	1819
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	–Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth Volume II. Millar, The Strand, London	1754
	–Life of Henry Prince of Wales A. Millar, The Strand, London	1759
	–The Court and Times of King James the First Volumes I, II. Henry Colburn, London	1848
CECIL Algernon.	A Life of Robert Cecil, First Earl of Salisbury John Murray, London	1915
CHALMERS George.	The Life of Mary Queen of Scots John Murray, Albemarle Street, Scotland	1822
CHAMBERS Robert.	The Life of King James the First Volume I. Constable & Co. Scotland	1830
DAVENPORT R.A.	Dictionary of Biography Gray & Brown, London	1832
DEVEREUX B. Walter.	Lives and Letters of the Devereux Earls of Essex In the Reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I Volume I, II. John Murray, Albemarle Street	1853
ELLIS Havelock.	Christopher Marlowe Vizetelly & Co., Catherine St, The Strand	1887
GOODMAN Godfrey.	The Court of King James the First Volumes I, II. Richard Bentley, London	1839
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HOTSON Leslie J.	The Death of Christopher Marlowe The Nonesuch Press, London	1925

HUME Martin.	–The Great Lord Burghley James Nisbet & Co. Limited, London	1898
	–Treason and Plot James Nisbet & Co. Limited, London	1901
INGRAM John H.	–Christopher Marlowe and his Associates Grant Richards, London	1904
	–Marlowe and his Poetry George G. Harrap & Company, London	1914
LAW Ernest.	–Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries G. Bell & Sons, London	1911
	–More About Shakespeare Forgeries G. Bell & Sons, London	1913
LEWIS J.G.	Christopher Marlowe Outlines W.W. Gibbings, Canterbury	1891
LILLY W.S.	England since the Reformation Volume V. Catholic Encyclopedia	<i>undated</i>
LINGARD John.	A History of England Volume VIII. Baldwin & Cradock, New Bond St.,	1830
LOCHITHEA.	Spyglass Duets. Elizabethan & Jacobean Plotters iUniverse, Indiana, ISBN: 978-1-4401-9287-6	2009
MARLOWE Christopher.	–Epigrammes & Elegies	<i>undated</i>
	– Certaine of Ovids Elegies	<i>undated</i>
NICHOLS John.	–The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, Volume II Society of Antiquaries, London	1823
	– The Progresses of King James the First Volumes I, II, III, IV. Society of Antiquaries, London	1828
SAINTSBURY George.	Elizabethan & Jacobean Pamphlets Percival & Co., London	1892
TROW M.J.	Who Killed Kit Marlowe? Sutton Publishing Limited, England	2001
WELLDON Anthony.	The Court and Character of King James	

John Wright, King's Head Old Bailey 1817

WEBSTER Archie.

Was Marlowe The Man?  
Original Essay, published in *The National Review*  
Vol. LXXXII., PP. 81–86 1923